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## THE KĒPU.

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Maspero (*Dawn of Civilization*, p. 675) thinks this officer a mere temple official. Johns *ABLCL.*, p. 213, expresses the same opinion. The data available render this untenable. A temple could have a kĕpu, as in Johns *ADD.*, No. 50, K.336, line 9; but in line 10 the tartan has a kĕpu; in line 8 is a kĕpu of the new palace. In Nbk. 460 we have a kĕpu of the city of Raḥza. Such passages are numerous and show that the term kĕpu expresses only the function of the officer, suggesting nothing as to the person or institution to which he was attached.

He becomes especially important for us when he appears as a royal official in subject provinces, where interference with the religious institutions of the nation is improbable. In VR. I. 58 and 110-11 Ašurbānīpal speaks of ki-e-pa-ni ša ki-rib Mu-ṣur u-pa-ki-du abu ba-nu-u-a; in II, 32, of šarrāni paḥāte ki-pa-a-ni ša ki-rib Mu-ṣur aš-ku-nu. We can hardly think these important deputies were temple attendants of any kind. In Assyria the kĕpu may often have been the chief official of a city.<sup>1</sup> Ašurbānīpal, VR. VI, 83, also speaks of ki-pa-a-ni of cities of Elam. In 81-6-25, Nbk., 109, we have ki-i-pi ša māt tāmtim and a ki-i-pi ša a-ḥu-ul-la-'a.

Again, the kĕpu is an important factor in political disturbances in Assyria and Babylonia. In H. 542, K. 114, the kĕpāni of Bit-Dakkūri are abroad on a raid, and the kĕpu of the beleaguered Bāb-Bitka appeals to Sargon for help, asking that the šaknu bring troops. We might infer that the kĕpu is not himself in command of troops; that his functions are not military.

The kĕpu is not frequent in the R.F. Harper letters. In addition to the case just cited, we may notice H. 437, K. 168, rv. 9. Order is being restored in Akkad; the šatammē and kĕpāni

<sup>1</sup> Delitzsch, *BAS.* II, 36, reads EN.ÉR.MES as kĕpāni, not bēl-alāni, in H. 88, K. 507; S. A. Smith reads it ḥāzanāte; (so also Delitzsch, *AL.* 1, No. 69; Brünnow 2826. These only show uncertainty as to the precise character of the officer known as "the lord of a town").

are in much fear of the king. In H. 442, K. 543, the *ki-ba-a-ni* whom the king has appointed at Aššûr have . . . *šê nu-sa-hi, šê ši-ib-še i-šab-bu-u*. This handling of royal grain is significant. In H. 524, K. 588, news from Nabû-ukannik is given, "not as Nabû-ukannik wrote it, but as his *ki-pa-nu* wrote it." In H. 214, K. 831, a *ķêpu* is in charge of the city *Ĥamû*; acting as a *paĥātu*? In H. 95, K. 1151, the *ķêpu* of Zibte with some other officials and fifty laborers (?) is asked for. A *šatammu*, *ki-e-pu*, and a *dupšarru* are mentioned in a broken letter about some gold, H. 476, 83-1-18, 5. Some *ķêpu* of Dêri has called for 2000 soldiers (or workmen?) for *ĥalšu* cities, in H. 868, 81-2-4, 119. Three or four broken passages yield no information, showing merely the title. In none do we hear of a *ķêpu* in a private or unofficial relation. These various data do not permit us to rest with the theory of a mere temple official, nor can we maintain that the *ķêpu* is always a government official.

Johns is surely correct, in *ADD.* II, p. 85, in his discussion of the first eight lines of col. III, K. 4395. As the first is the <sup>amēl</sup>*ki-e-pu*, the second the <sup>amēl</sup>*TIL.GID-da*, also known to be the *ķêpu*, and the seventh the <sup>amēl</sup>*NI.GAB*, usually read *ķêpu*, he conjectures that the intervening four may represent phases of the *ķêpu*'s functions. Yet with these hints he does not seem to have clearly comprehended them, conjecturing a rural magistrate as distinguished from an urban one. Magisterial functions are unproven by our data. Later in *ABLCL.*, Johns conjectured a temple functionary.

The seven titles referred to are, <sup>1amēl</sup>*ki-e-pu*, <sup>2amēl</sup>*TIL.GID-da*, <sup>3amēl</sup>*rab irriše*, <sup>4amēl</sup>*rab ĥalšu*, <sup>5amēl</sup>*rab birtê*, <sup>6amēl</sup>*rab imêr u-rât*, <sup>7amēl</sup>*NI.GAB*. If these are developments from the primitive function we should be interested in determining what that was. Johns' theory of a rural magistrate will not explain it, nor harmonize with the occasional appearance of the *ķêpu* in connection with a temple or as the agent of a private individual.

The first ideogram above, <sup>amēl</sup>*TIL.GID-da*, is also written *TIL-la GID-da*, H. 542, K. 114, obv. 8; *TI-la GID-da*, MEŠ, Str. Nbd. No. 637, 8, or *TI-la MEŠ*, Str. Nbd. 102. In the salutations we meet the phrase *ûmê TI-la GID-da* or *TIL-la GID-da*, "days of long life; also *GID-da ûmê*,

H. 736, K. 1030, obv. 6. The <sup>amêl</sup>TIL-la GID-da would then appear to be "the man who prolongs life." Winckler, *AOF.* II, p. 12, collates K. 3500, K. 444, K. 10235. Esarhaddon is cursing the rebels of Egypt, Philistia, and Phœnicia. In lines 11, 12, "May thy life . . . and letters which I have sent thee for a living from the kêpu thou shalt not . . . . If the kêpu is not gracious, thou shalt see his face, thou shalt break into weeping, not by their means (shalt thou prevail?)." The fragment at least suggests that indigent persons might be recommended to the kêpu, or appeal to him for sustenance.

The third title above is "chief of the farmers." This idea connects well with the preceding one. Compare Gen. 47:14-26. The Hebrew tradition makes Joseph to be born under Babylonian law in the province of Ḥarran, and to introduce into Egypt a land system whereby the tillable soil falls largely into the hands of the king, as in modern Turkey, and the hands of the priests. The system is based upon a distribution of fortified store cities. The bankrupt farmer secures cattle, seed, and provisions from the royal agents. The live stock is largely owned by the government. The historicity of the narrative, or the antiquity of the system in Egypt, does not here concern us. It suffices that such a system was known to the Hebrew, was considered due to a former Babylonian subject, and that Joseph's function was "to preserve life;" Gen. 45:5; 47:25. Zaphnath-paaneah has sometimes been thought to be a corruption of some god's name + "let there be life."

We may include in the comparison now the rab ḥalṣê, rab birtê, and rab urâte; they would be readily explicable from the preceding suggestions as developments of the kêpu. We may notice Nbk. 460; Nadinu says, "My lord, thou knowest that for seeds to the kêpu of Raḥza I sent, and money for the seeds I gave him." The kêpu of Ḥararâte sends a supply of domestic animals to Sennacherib, Taylor Prism, I, 52 *sqq.* How important these distributed store cities would be, in peace and in war, needs no minute discussion. They were at all times the life of pauperized masses; and necessarily strong cities as well as store cities, *cf.* Exod. 1:11. The overseer of such was not necessarily magistrate or military officer. But he was required to be a capable man of business, and a methodical accountant. We have already noticed the kêpu's connection with the ḥalṣu, and a requisition

for workmen for such cities, in H. 868. The famous Nabû-bêl-šumâte is a *ķêpu* in Taylor Prism I, 52, and is *ķêpu* of an <sup>alu</sup> *birât* in H. 88, K. 507. We may add that the salutations in H. 247, K. 1027, suggest that an <sup>alu</sup> *birât* was not identical with "garrison city," repetition not being the rule in salutations. Compare Br. 1562: *bi-ra-ti*=*ki-ru-u*, "grove, orchard."

Various cuneiform inscriptions speak of such stores, or store cities. Hammurabi, Prologue III, 18 *sqq.*, extends the tillable land of Dilbat, and heaps up stores of grain for Uraš. Similar corn stores are mentioned by Gudea. Sargon, Cyl, 37-42, mentions his similar efforts. His uniform prices, we may be sure, could not be maintained unless the government itself were in the market, with ample granaries. "The king's price" appears also in the Code of Hammurabi, § 51.

Joseph's system would not only make him "the chief farmer" of Egypt, but also chief of the royal stud and herds, and hence employment of his brothers as subagents. So, in the titles discussed, a *rab urâte* would be a logical development of an expanding system; we find him immediately after the *rab birtê*. Nabûšumiddin in the RFHarper letters is the chief of the king's stud, reporting regularly arrivals of horses, detailing variety, condition, training, etc. In H. 557, K. 893, some one complains of him for having exacted from the servants of the king from the fields of the *birtê* ali provisions in excess of the royal orders. Thus the *rab urâte* and the *ķêpu* seem connected by occasional references with the <sup>alu</sup> *ħalšê* and <sup>alu</sup> *birâte*. In *LIH.* 56, 88, *šab birti* of a city are mentioned, in connection with grain to be furnished them. Add the letters of Hammurabi concerning his cattle (King, *LIH.*), and the royal herd accounts in the E. A. Hoffman collection (Radau, *EBH.*); compare Mesha, king of Moab "a sheepmaster." In Camb. 194, the <sup>amel</sup> *TIL.la GID.da* of Êbabbara, is the proper person to receive 200 geese for the temple. It seems that he lets out 50 "mother geese," requiring a return of 200 geese within the year. For the seizure of choice animals by royal agents, compare Neb. I, col. I, 51 *sqq.*; contrast 1 Sam. 8:15-17; 12:3.

That such agents were equally important in the management of temple property, or that of individuals, is apparent at sight. The temple stores are well described by Johns, *ABLCL.*, 211 *sqq.* In 82-7-4, 13, we have a single page of a *ķêpu*'s account book.

Pinches (*BOR.* II, 143) thought it a list of "gifts to a house of God." Its meaning is clearer today. Of 765 measures of grain borrowed, only 150 were returned directly to the kēpu; the rest was delivered at his order to various other parties. In H. 516, 81-27, 31, is the only passage in the RFHarper letters connecting a kēpu with temples: "Nabû-aḫē-iddin the kēpu of Êsagila, I have put in charge of the revenues of all the temples round about Babylon." Clearly he is not the servitor of some god, but a capable business manager, handling temple magazines and lands as royal ones were handled.

Taxes being largely paid in kind, we can understand the necessity of Assyrian kēpāni in Egypt, not as tax collectors, but as guardians of the store system upon which the farmer's ability to pay taxes depended. The kēpu in the land of Elam was probably called a šarnuppu; see H. 281, K. 13.<sup>2</sup> Nabû-bēl-šumāte, once a kēpu in Babylonia, is in Elam dealing with a similar custodian of stores.

1 Kings 4:26-28; 9:15-19; 10:26; 1 Chron. 27:25-31; 2 Chron. 9:5-12 tell of similar developments in Israel, probably adopted from the Canaanites. Whether or not they existed in Canaan before the domination of Babylonia, about 2100 B. C., is yet to be determined. Vast subterranean storehouses have been found at Tell Zakariyeh and elsewhere (*PEFSt.*, 1899). Neh. 6:1-13 and Is. 5:8 are worthy of note. The last passage may recall the contrast between the small amounts of money or produce mentioned in contracts of the first empire and the enormous quantities named in contracts of the Persian period. The small land owner may have become extinct in Babylonia. (*Cf.* 1 Sam. 8:14.) We do not yet know that the Israelite store cities were administered like those of Egypt or Babylonia. The numerous loans without interest from stores in Babylonia may have been to persons who were renting land from the lender. Joseph's tenants of royal lands pay a rental of one-fifth the crop, which recalls a common rate of interest in Babylonia. That royal lands and temple lands were handled upon the same basis of valuation may be indicated by the frequent dedication of lands to the temples. The tenants apparently but changed landlords, paying the temple what they formerly paid the king. Compare 1 Sam. 8:15, 17 with Lev. 27:30; see Ezra 7:20-27, and Eze-

<sup>2</sup> Treated by Johnston, *AEL.*, p. 139, and Van Gelderen, *BAS.*, IV, 257.

kiel's endowment scheme, 45. A comparison of Br. 6475, 6499, 6513, shows the ideogram for zakû used to express "tithe," or tenth. The "dedicated land" paid the same rate in Assyria that was customary in Israel. How old the system was that put the cultivation of the temple lands out of the hands of the priests themselves we do not know. The Code of Hammurabi, §§ 178, 182, suggests that it may have existed then. In *LIH.*, No. 38, a patesi is transferred from the service of one man to that of another; and the new employer is reminded that he is responsible for the management of the patesi's field. Yet in 83-1-18, 264, Nbd. 934, a šangû of Sippara loans temple corn. Probably this implies that the temple was temporarily without a business manager. Compare Neh. 13:10 *sqq.*

An ideogram for kēpu not found in K. 4395 is AL-la GID-da, Brünnow, 5752; suggestive of TIL-la GID-da. But instead of "lengthening life" this would seem to indicate "to lengthen or foster agriculture." For Brünnow, 5750, shows, GIS.AL = GIS.APIN; 5771, AL.DI = erešu; 5758, <sup>amēl</sup> AL.AG.A is rapīku. This word Delitzsch (*HWB.*, 626) allies with šakāku, "to plough or harrow;" cf. CH., col. XIII, 14, 29, and sikki, "a plough," in modern Arabic in Syria. Brünnow, 5772, GIS.SA.AL.HAB is alluḥappu or šakḫu ša šē'im, "grain sack." The agricultural associations of AL are marked. This new ideogram "fosterer of agriculture (?)" recalls the rab irrišē in the K. 4395 series.

This connection of the kēpu with the agricultural interests of the country in all its phases, and his importance when supervising temple or government lands, suggests some possibilities relative to early Sumerian kings. <sup>amēl</sup> APIN, respectfully addressed in some RFHarper letters, might be a title for the king himself. In the EAH. collection (Radau, *EBH.*), are very old accounts of royal agents. In some of these the king seems to be called "farmer." PA.LUGAL.ENGAR in EAH. 34, Radau reads "overseer of royal shepherds" (*EBH.* p. 379); but ENGAR is usually read "farmer" and is in the adjective position, making one think of "officer of the farmer king." Compare also EAH. 25; the oxen accounted for to the farmer king are are specifically "plough oxen." Such "Farmer king" as title may be compared with the Hindoo Gai-kwar or "Cowherd" of Baroda. Notice also Brünnow 3819-21; <sup>amēl</sup> AB may be either

“farmer, prince, or elder;” suggesting a time when princes were farmers. Those believing the Sumerians to be Mongols may recall that the Chinese Emperor, the “Son of Heaven” still plows at an annual agricultural ceremony. Again, UR-Ningirsu (Aṛad-Ninib?) name of an early king, is simply irrišu or ikkaru, Br. 11267. Literally it is “servant of Ningirsu,” who is Ninib, Br. 10996, the NIN.APIN, Br. 11007, or DINGIR.APIN, Br. 1020, or “lord of dates,” Br. 767. Radau (*EBH.* 23) quotes Bur-Sin, the SIB.SAG or “chief shepherd” of Nippur, and ENGAR.LIG.GA of Ur; “mighty farmer” instead of Radau’s “powerful shepherd” seems natural. Invocations of Nisaba, the “harvest-goddess,” by the early Babylonian rulers, are to be considered. Against such Sumerian ideas set the Semitic preference for “faithful shepherd,” familiar in royal inscriptions from Ḥammurabi onward. Yet the older view does not wholly disappear: Babylonian kings boast the title of “cultivator of the sacred tree;” Nebuchadnezzar II. calls himself “Farmer of Babylon.” Hence <sup>amēl</sup> APIN might be a royal title in some RFHarper letters. In the collision of agriculturists of the river valleys (see TIK.EN-na) and Semitic shepherds of the highlands, it has been suggested that we might find a basis for legends like that of Cain and Abel.

These accounts of royal plough cattle, of temple stores, and granaries of the gods, let us understand that a kēpu would be needed by every large landholder, sacred or secular. Four sections of the Code of Ḥammurabi, 253–56, deal with this system of farming. The data above concerning AL and the kēpu suggest “means of cultivation” as the meaning of the ideogram AL.KAK.A (erēšu + epēšu). Such means our various citations have shown to be cattle, seed, and sustenance while raising a crop. “Implements,” as Johns translates, is too restricted. Yet tools were sometimes supplied. In 82–9–18, 116, Str. Cyr. 26, a wealthy contractor, Sulā, leases 60 gur of land from the ki-i-pi of Êbabbara, and is furnished with 12 oxen, 8 irrišê, or cultivators, 3 iron ploughshares, 4 hoes, and 5 appāta of corn for seed, for support of the irrišê, and for provender for the cattle. The renter guarantees the temple 300 gur of corn. Tools probably came from the šutummu, or “storehouse” of the temple, supervised by the šatammu. Observe the ša-tam bīt unāti, or “keeper of the tool house,”



in Boundary Stone 103, Col. IV, 9. This assistant of the *ķêpu* and *TU.bîti* frequently occurs; notice the *amêlšá-tam amêl TU.bîti ilu* Marduk in V. A. 451, KB. IV, p. 152. *ŠÁ. GAL* in the sections of the Code is, as Johns translates, "provender" (Br. 8051, *ukullu*; see *HWB.*), rather than "growing plants" (Harper). Compare K. 2867, 27; *ukulti alpê šêni*. In EAH. 1 (*EBH.*, p. 323), we have "10 gur grain of the king for one (?) gur copper, as provender for the cattle." (Cf. II R. 39, 54, c. d.) In EAH. 5 (*EBH.* 324) we again have *ukullu* as food. The four sections of the Code are valuable as showing the indigence of the man who was dependent upon the *ķêpu* system of farming. Men financially responsible, §§ 42-65, make compensation or restitution for their delinquencies. In the *ķêpu* system the Code apparently assumes that the delinquent has nothing wherewith to repay, and punishes him, for a minor offense, by mutilation; for total delinquency he is torn to pieces by oxen (Johns, *DB.* V, 607). Such punishment may indicate that those dependent upon the *ķêpu* may have belonged largely to the politically inferior *muškênu* class. We have therein some suggestion as to the hard lot of the man who should, according to Esarhaddon's wish, find the *ķêpu* in a bad humor.

No English word seems to me to exactly express the meaning of the word *ķêpu*. As the agent of private parties he is nearly the "factor" of the English landholder; but as supervisor of government stores or temple revenues he has not his equivalent in western civilization though remotely suggesting the Indian agent of the American Indian reservations. I prefer to leave the term untranslated.

The ideogram *NI.GAB* is often translated "porter." As a name for the *ķêpu*, it may go back to the primitive custodian or "doorkeeper" of communal granaries. A *Nabû-bêl-šumâte* is a *NI.GAB* in Johns' *ADD.* 9, line 14. A *rab NI.GAB.MEŠ* occurs in *ADD.* No. 150, line 6.